

I am very excited to come before you today to speak on a matter that is of great importance to members of my community and to the residents of the state of Michigan. For as long as I have lived near Belleville, Michigan, I have heard how, "Canadians send their trash to Michigan." It really seemed unbelievable to me that Michigan residents would stand for the importation of another country's garbage into our beautiful state. I later learned that the trash not only flows from Canada, but also from states as far away as Maine. How did it make sense economically to ship trash all the way from Ontario to Michigan or from Maine to Michigan for that matter?

The answer is really quite simple. Part of the answer is that Michigan only charges 21 cents per ton for trash dumped in Michigan. The other part of the answer is that Michigan currently has excess landfill capacity. These two defects in our solid waste policy make us an obvious magnet for trash in the region. These two defects make Carleton Farms Landfill in Sumpter Township – a mere 15 miles from my own home in Van Buren Township – a perfect dumping ground for Toronto's sewage sludge. These defects in our solid waste policy are the reason that a 35-ton truck dumped half of its load of this sewage sludge in Huron Township last year. Michigan's lack of good solid waste policies explains why police closed the I-94 north service drive in Van Buren Township for an "aluminum sludge" spill, which could have contained heavy metals such as cadmium and barium. By the way, the latter sludge truck was heading to one of only a handful of hazardous waste landfills in the entire country.

The bill in question today is an obvious step in the right direction. By banning new landfills until 2012, Michigan will lose much of its appeal as a future dumping ground. Have no doubt, the trash industry will move in and bring more landfills to

Michigan if this committee and this chamber do not pass this bill. There is no doubt in my mind that the citizens of Michigan do *not* want another landfill in their state. This bill is one step in a positive direction for Michigan's trash problems, but this legislative body must do more for our state's citizens who have demanded a solution to this problem for years with no results. I have read excerpts from the State House and State Senate Journals, and I have been utterly disappointed with the excuses for lack of action. Every excuse made is simply another attempt to stall a process that has the popular support of Michigan's population.

For the sake of Michigan's environment and for the health and comfort of citizens in my area, I urge the support and swift passage of House Bill 4047. Thank you.